

COUNCIL 11th SEPTEMBER 2014

PUBLIC STATEMENTS & QUESTIONS

List of registered public speakers

Items not listed on the agenda – taken at item 8

1. Marian McNeir MBE - Co-Chairman of the Bath Area Cultural Forum
2. David Redgewell

Governance options – item 9

3. Peter Duppa-Miller – Combe Hay Parish Council
4. Nicolette Boater

- **Statements, when supplied in advance, are attached at the end of the document.**

Public Questions for Council 10th July 2014

(NOTE: The following questions and answers will be published on the Council's website as soon as possible after the meeting and linked to the published draft minutes of this meeting.)

1. Question from Nicolette Boater

Building on the reforms introduced by the 2000 Local Government Act, the 2009 Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act requires local authorities to designate a Scrutiny Officer (and other statutory officers are excluded from this designation), who will "engage" with "Members, the Executive and Officers" so as to "promote", "support" and "guide" the work of "overview and scrutiny committee(s)."

At the 12.9.2013 meeting of this Council I further highlighted the business value and strategic importance of having a non executive officer working alongside those with more formal roles and responsibilities and implored the Council "to specify, budget, appoint and only then designate" such an officer.

Furthermore, in observing how Council policies have or have not been developed, and how decisions are in fact made and influenced, my belief in the strategic as well as statutory importance of the Scrutiny Officer role has only grown since the passage of the 2009 Act.

Therefore, **can the Council confirm that adequate and appropriate Scrutiny Officer resource has or will be put in place**, such that whatever the political shape and colour of the administration, the policies and decisions of this Council will be rigorously overviewed and scrutinised in the enduring interests of its entire electorate?

Answer from the Leader of the Council

The Council keeps under regular review the contribution that Overview and Scrutiny makes to effective decision-making through its research, analysis, policy development and challenge to decision makers. On behalf of the Council and the members of its six panels I can assure the questioner that we and they are satisfied with the quality and effectiveness of the function and believe it is appropriately resourced, supported and respected by decision makers.